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THE
F U N E R A L

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A R A B E R T,

MONK OF LA TRAPPE:

A

P O E M.

BY MR. JERNINGHAM.

A NEW EDITION.

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MONK OF ST. THOMAS

P O E M

By MR. J. B. WINGHAM



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ADVERTISEMENT.

ARABERT, a young ecclesiastic, retired to the convent of *La Trappe*, in obedience to a vow he had taken during a fit of illness: LEONORA, with whom he had lived in the strictest intimacy, followed her lover, and by the means of a disguise, obtained admission into the monastery, where a few days after she assisted at her lover's funeral.

THE
F U N E R A L, &c.

FAIR LEONORA, by affliction led,
Sought the dread dome where sleep the hallow'd
dead:

The solemn edifice was wrapt around
In midnight darkness, and in peace profound:
A solitary lamp with languid light, 5
Serv'd not to chase, but to disclose the night:
Serv'd to disclose (of all her grief the source,)
The tomb that gap'd for ARABERTUS' corse:
To this, she sent the deep the frequent sigh,
And spoke—the tear just gath'ring in her eye. 10

B

' Doom'd to receive all that my soul holds dear,
 ' Give him that rest his heart refus'd him here:
 ' Oh screen him from the pain the tender know,
 ' The train of sorrows that from passion flow;
 ' And to his envied new-born state adjoin,
 ' (Or all is vain) an ignorance of mine.'

15

As thus she mourn'd, an aged priest drew near,
 (Whose pure life glided as the riv'let clear,)

The virtuous ANSELM.—Tho' in cloisters bred,
 Still bright-ey'd Wisdom to his cell he led:
 From paths of sophistry he lov'd to stray,
 To tread the walk where Nature led the way.
 The prior's rank he long had held approv'd,
 Esteem'd, rever'd, and as a parent lov'd:
 Unskilful in the jargon of the schools,
 He knew humanity's diviner rules:
 To others gentle, to himself severe,
 On sorrow's wound he dropt the healing tear.

20

25

In all the negligence of grief he found,
The fair extended on the naked ground. 30

Touch'd at her woe the sacred father said,
' Well may'st thou droop if happiness be fled:
' Sure, if at holy ARABERT's decease,
' Impetuous sorrows rush upon thy peace,
' Some much-lov'd friend in him you must deplore; 35
' Or, dearer still, a brother is no more:
' Yet, as thro' life our weary steps we bend,
' Let us not sink when beating storms descend:
' Still let Religion hold unrival'd sway,
' And Patience walk companion of our way. 40
' Ah, lose not sight of that delightful shore,
' Whose blissful bow'rs shall friends to friends restore:
' Tho' here misfortune comes to blast our will,
' The Heav'ns are just, and God a Father still.

' Blest be the voice, the rising mourner said, 45
' That bids Affliction raise her drooping head:

' That bids me hope (beyond ev'n Death's domain,)

' These eyes shall banquet on my love again.

' Ah, start not ANSELM—for to truth allied,

' Impiety now throws her mask aside : 50

' No holy Monk by contemplation led,

' To these sequestered mansions of the dead ;

' No youth devoted to Religion's pow'r,

' Implores thy pity at this awful hour.—

' The guilty secret—I'll at length unfold— 55

' In me—(forgive)— a woman you behold.

' Ah fly me not, let mercy now prevail,

' And deign to mark my sad disastrous tale.'

' Known to misfortune from my tender years,

' My parents' ashes drank my early tears : 60

' A barb'rous uncle, to each vice allied,

' The office of a parent ill supplied :

' Of my entire inheritance possess'd,

' By lucre prompted, and by fortune blest,

- ' He pass'd the ocean never to return, 65
 ' And left me weeping o'er my parents' urn:
 ' Then ARABERT the gen'rous stranger came,
 ' To sooth my sorrows, and relieve my shame:
 ' Beneath his tender care, my woes decreas'd,
 ' More than Religion's, he was Pity's priest: 70
 ' To reach his bounty my affection strove,
 ' Till gratitude was heighten'd into love:
 ' Nor he at length refus'd the lover's part,
 ' The pity that adorn'd, betray'd his heart.
 ' How ardently he wish'd the nuptial rite, 75
 ' In holy wedlock, might our hands unite:
 ' But stern Religion at our vows exclaim'd,
 ' And tore the bands that Love and Nature fram'd:
 ' For then devoted to her hallow'd shrine,
 ' His country's laws forbade him to be mine. 80
 ' Tho' from my mind each flatt'ring thought retir'd,
 ' And in my bosom, hope and peace expir'd;
 ' Yet on their ruins, love triumphant rose:
 ' Enough—shame o'er the rest a mantle throws:

' At length Remorse effaced the guilty scene, 85
 ' And to his breast apply'd her dagger keen;
 ' Refrain'd in full career the erring youth,
 ' And led him back to Innocence and Truth:
 ' 'Twas then he fled from Pleasure's rosy bow'rs,
 ' To woo Religion in these gloomy tow'rs: 90
 ' Yet ere he fled, my bliss he fondly plann'd,
 ' And scatter'd riches with a lavish hand:
 ' Ah, what to me avail'd the golden store?
 ' The giver gone, the gift cou'd charm no more.

' While in the gloom his tedious absence cast, 95
 ' My former life in fancy I repass'd,
 ' Repentance gain'd admision to my breast,
 ' Nor did it enter an unwelcome guest:
 ' For ne'er to Pleasure I dismiss'd the rein,
 ' Free and unconscious of reflection's pain; 100
 ' If hapless LEONORA lov'd too well,
 ' Content, fair Virtue's friend, with Virtue fell:

- ' But not my stubborn soul cou'd pray'r subdue,
 ' Ev'n grafted on remorse my passion grew;
 ' Too fatal passion—by its impulse led, 105
 ' In man's attire to this retreat I fled:
 ' Yet then, ev'n then to bashful fear allied,
 ' Still o'er my love did modesty preside:
 ' In those sweet moments that precede the night,
 ' When peaceful Nature wears a soften'd light, 110
 ' I met the youth within the solemn grove,
 ' (His frequent walk) absorb'd in heav'nly love:
 ' I strove to speak, but words refus'd to flow,
 ' And, fix'd, I stood a monument of woe:
 ' While God and he employ the trembling scene, 115
 ' 'Twere sacrilege, I thought, to rush between:
 ' Still from that hour my wishes I restrain'd,
 ' And in my breast th' unwilling secret chain'd:
 ' Unknown to him, yet half-content I grew,
 ' So that his form might daily charm my view: 120
 ' Think how misguided by your guileless heart,
 ' You took for virtue, what in me was art,

‘ And highly honor’d with applauding strain,
 ‘ The zeal that join’d Religion’s sober train,
 ‘ Unknowing that the call thou did’st approve, 125
 ‘ And all my virtue, all my zeal was love:
 ‘ But new Affliction, with relentless hand,
 ‘ O’erthrew the project that my heart had plann’d:
 ‘ Amidst the horrors of the lonesome night,
 ‘ A ghastly spectre rush’d upon my sight, 130
 ‘ And pour’d these accents on my trembling ear,’
Think not impiety shall triumph here:
Thy hopes are blasted—Death’s tremendous bell
Shall sound, ere many hours, thy lover’s knell:
 ‘ I started from my couch, with fright impress’d, 135
 ‘ And anxious doubts were busy in my breast:
 ‘ By love then prompted—yet by love dismay’d,
 ‘ The peopled choir I tremblingly survey’d;
 ‘ Still mid th’ innumerable monastic train,
 ‘ These eyes solicited his form in vain: 140
 ‘ Nor in the field or pensive grove retir’d
 ‘ Could I discover whom my heart requir’d:

' Then fure (I cried) at this unhappy hour 145

' Does anguish o'er his cell diffuse its pow'r :

' Shall LEONORA not relieve his pain,

' And with these arms his drooping head sustain ?

' Say, at the couch, when death is stalking round,

' Shall not the spouse of his fond heart be found ! 150

' Ah no—th' affection that subdues me still,

' At that dread moment check'd my ardent will,

' Left rushing on his fight I should control

' The holy thoughts that hover'd o'er his soul.

' This low'ring morn disclos'd the fatal truth : 155

' Oh early lost—oh lov'd—oh hapless youth—

' Fix'd to the column of the hallow'd porch—

' 'Twas scarcely light—some fury lent her torch—

' I read—

The pious ARABERT's no more, 160

The peace the dead require, for him implore :

' Let peace, let joy, (I said) his spirit join,

' Nor joy, nor peace must e'er encircle mine :

D

- ' Lamented youth ! too tenderly allied,
 ' In vain you fled me, and in vain you died, 165
 ' Still to your image, which this breast inurns,
 ' My constant heart a lamp perpetual burns.

 ' But thou, to whom as friend he did impart
 ' Each latent wish, and foible of the heart ;
 ' For well I know, where sorrow drops her tear, 170
 ' Or Misery complains, thou still art near ;
 ' Ah say, by love did my idea drest,
 ' Come to his mind thus welcome, thus carest ?
 ' Or on his soul come rushing undesir'd
 ' The fatal fair, by female arts inspir'd, 175
 ' Who dimm'd the lustre of his radiant name,
 ' And from his temples tore the flow'r of fame :
 ' Who thro' the labyrinth of Pleasure's bow'r
 ' Allur'd (for beauty such as mine had pow'r)
 ' Ev'n to the dang'rous steep—and cast him down 180
 ' From high repute to grov'ling disrepute :

' Wretch that I am, to my distressful state
 ' There wanted not th' addition of his hate:
 ' For him I plung'd my artless youth in shame,
 ' Unlock'd reserve, and sacrificed my fame: 185
 ' Still, still I fear (unable to confide,)
 ' Before my ARABERT, the lover died:
 ' This thought (to thee I'll own) suspends my grief,
 ' While cold indifference comes to my relief:
 ' Say virtuous ANSELM, if this thought be vain, 190
 ' And give, Oh give me all my grief again.

To her replied the pity-breathing seer,
 ' Mark well my words, and lose thy idle fear:
 ' When on the couch of Death, the victim lay,
 ' Not in that moment was his friend away: 195
 ' As at his side I took my mournful stand,
 ' With feeble grasp he seiz'd my offer'd hand,
 ' And thus began—"The fatal dart is sped,
 " Soon, soon shall ARABERT encrease the dead:

" 'Tis well—for what can added life bestow, 200

" But days returning still with added woe:

" Say, have I not secluded from my sight,

" The lovely object of my past delight?

" Ah, had I too dethron'd her from my mind,

" When here the holy brotherhood I join'd, 205

" Remorse wou'd not, encreasing my disease,

" Prey on my soul, and rob it of its ease:

" And yet I strove unequal to the part,

" Weak to perform the sacrifice of heart:

" And now, ev'n now, too feeble to control, 210

" I feel her clinging to my parting soul:"

' He spoke—(my sympathetic bosom bled,)

' And to the realms of Death his spirit fled.'

The fair rejoin'd: ' Miled by foul distrust,

' To him, whose heart was mine, am I unjust? 215

' Ah, ARABERT, th' unwilling fault forgive;

' Dead to th' alluring world, in thee I live:

‘ My thoughts, my deep regret, my sorrows own,
 ‘ No view, no object still but thee alone:
 ‘ At all the vengeance bursting from above, 220
 ‘ Alarm’d, I weep, I shudder, yet I love.’

As thus she spoke, the death-bell smote her ear,
 While to the porch the fun’ral train drew near :
 Ah, LEONORE in that tremendous hour,
 Did’st thou not feel all Heav’n’s avenging pow’r, 225
 When moving thro’ the isle, the choral band,
 And vested priests, with torches in their hand,
 Gave to thy view, unfortunately dear,
 Thy lover sleeping on th’ untimely bier ?

Collecting now at length her scatter’d force, 230
 With trembling footsteps she approach’d the corse,
 And while she check’d the conflict in her breast,
 The wide-encircling throng she thus address’d :
 ‘ Well may ye mark me with astonish’d eyes,
 ‘ Audacious hypocrite in man’s disguise; 235

' Who urg'd by passion, dar'd with steps profane,
 ' Approach the hallow'd dome of Virtue's train:
 ' Lead me, ah lead me to the dungeon's gloom,
 ' The rack prepare—I yield me to your doom :
 ' Yet still shou'd Pity in your breast abide, 240
 ' And Pity sure to virtue is allied,
 ' To my distress benign attention lend,
 ' Your acts of rigor for a while suspend,
 ' Till o'er this bier ('tis Nature's kind relief,)
 ' I've pour'd my plaints, and pay'd the rites of grief. 245
 ' Ah, he was dearer to this bleeding heart,
 ' Far dearer than expression can impart.

' Thou who didst place us in this vale of tears,
 ' Where sorrow blasts the plant that pleasure rears ;
 ' If, as the tenets of our creed require, 250
 ' Thy waken'd justice breathes immortal ire ;
 ' If love, from whence ev'n here misfortunes flow,
 ' Beyond the grave you curse with endless woe ?

- ' Ah not o'er ARABERT thy vengeance spread!
- ' On me, on me thy darts of anger shed! 255
- ' For I allur'd him far from Virtue's way,
- ' And led his youthful innocence astray:
- ' Ah not in punishment our fate conjoin,
- ' He shar'd the rapture, but the guilt was mine.'

With trembling hand she now the veil withdrew,* 260

When to the well-known features struck her view:

Absopt in grief she cast a fond survey—

At length her thoughts in murmurs broke away:

- ' That eye—which shed on mine voluptuous light,
- ' Alas how sunk in everlasting night? 265
- ' See from those lips the living colour fled,
- ' Where love resided, and where pleasure fed!
- ' And where bright Eloquence had pour'd her store,
- ' Dumb Horror sits—and Wisdom is no more:
- ' Yet ere the worm (since this is doom'd its prey) 270
- ' Shall steal the ling'ring likeness quite away,

* 'Tis usual to bury the monks of La Trappe in their monastic habit extended on a plank.

' On that cold lip sure LEONORE may dwell,

' And, free from guilt, imprint the long farewell?

She added not—but bending low her head,

Three times the mourner kiss'd th' unconscious dead. 275

Now holy ANSELM urg'd her to restrain

Her boundless grief in rev'rence of the fane :

She answer'd, starting from the sable bier,

' Can I forget that ARABERT was dear !

' Can I, cold monitor, from hence remove, 280

' His worth unrival'd, and his lasting love !

' Can I forget, as destitute I lay,

' To sickness, grief, and penury a prey,

' How eagerly he flew at Pity's call,

' Put forth his hand, and rais'd me from my fall ! 285

' All unsolicited he gave me wealth,

' He gave me solace, and he gave me health ;

' And, dearer than the bliss those gifts impart,

' He strain'd me to his breast, and gave his heart :

' And shall these hallow'd walls and awful fane, 290

' Reproach the voice that pours the praiseful strain ?

' Say at the friend's, the guardian's, lover's tomb,

' Can sorrow sleep, and gratitude be dumb ?

' But I submit—and bend thus meekly low,

' To kiss th' avenging hand that dealt the blow : 295

' Resign'd I quit the losing path I trod,

' Fall'n is my idol—and I worship God.'

She ceas'd—the choir intones the fun'ral song,

Which holy echoes plaintively prolong :

And now the solemn organ, tun'd to woe, 300

Pour'd the clear notes pathetically slow :

These rites perform'd—along th' extending fane,

She now attends the slow-proceeding train ;

Who o'er the mournful cypress-shaded way,

To the expecting tomb, the dead convey : 305

See now the priests, the closing act prepare,

And to the darksome vault commit their care :

At this dread scene, too feelingly distress'd,

She pour'd the last effusions of her breast.

' Come dove-like peace, to watch this sacred shrine, 310

' And brood incessant, with a love like mine.'

She paus'd—then (o'er the yawning tomb reclin'd)

In all the tendernefs of grief rejoin'd :

' Oh beauty's flow'r—oh pleasure ever new—

' Oh friendship, love, and constancy adieu: 315

' Ye virtues that adorn'd the unhappy youth,

' Affection, pity, confidence, and truth,

' The gen'rons thoughts that with the feeling dwell,

' And sympathy of heart—farewell, farewell!

' Not all of ARABERT this tomb contains, 320

' All is not here while LEONORE remains:

' Methinks, solicitous my form to meet,

' The conscions ashes heave beneath my feet:

' Methinks a voice ev'n animates the clay,

' And in low accents summons me away: 325

" Haste LEONORE—thy other self rejoin,

' And let thy glowing ashes mix with mine:

' Ah, trust me ARABERT! to share thy doom,

' Prepar'd, resolv'd, I'll meet thee in the tomb:

' Forbear, Oh Heav'n, in pity to these tears, 330

' To curse my sorrow with a length of years.

' And when this drooping form shall press the bier,

' Say virtuous ANSELM, wilt thou not be near?

' The friendly requiem for my soul to crave,

' And lay these limbs in this lamented grave? 335

' Then when this tortur'd heart shall cease to burn,

' Our blended dust shall warm the faithful urn:

' Nor distant far is that releasing hour,

' For Nature now oppress'd beyond her pow'r,

' Resigns at length, my troubled soul to rest, 340

' And Grief's last anguish rushes thro' my breast.

Behold her now extended on the ground,

And see the sacred brethren kneeling round:

Them she addresses in a fault'ring tone,

' Say, cannot Death my daring crime atone? 345

' Ah, let compassion now your heart inspire,

' Amid your pray'rs, I unalarm'd expire.

‘ Thou who art ev’n in this dread moment dear,

‘ Oh, shade of ARABERT, still hover near.

‘ I come.’—

350

—And now emerging from her woes,

(’Twas Love’s last effort) from the earth she rose;

And, strange to tell, with strong affection fraught,

She headlong plung’d into the gloomy vault:

And there, what her impassion’d wish requir’d, 355

On the lov’d breast of ARABERT expir’d.

F I N I S.

